

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

In the picturesque village of Mereclough, nestled amidst rolling hills and tranquil meadows, there existed a tale of valor and determination. It was a story that had etched its mark on the landscape, weaving its way into the fabric of local folklore. The tale revolved around a fateful clash between two legendary fighting cocks, Ormerod's Butterfly and Towneley's Caesar. The heart of the village was adorned with a quaint and humble inn, aptly named the Fighting Cocks. Its weathered timbers and worn stone walls had witnessed countless tales of revelry and camaraderie. Yet, it was the story of the epic battle that had taken place just outside its doors that captured the imaginations of those who dwelled there.

On a bright and crisp morning, the village Green served as the battleground for an eagerly anticipated showdown between Ormerod's Butterfly and Towneley's Caesar. The air was thick with anticipation as villagers and enthusiasts gathered around the makeshift cockpit, their eyes fixed on the feathered warriors.

The combatants strutted with regal confidence, their vibrant plumage shimmering in the sunlight.

The atmosphere was charged with a palpable sense of competition as the two majestic birds eyed each other intently, fully aware of the impending clash that would decide their fate.

As the fight commenced, the crowd erupted in cheers and applause, their voices blending with the fluttering wings and crowing calls. The clash was fierce and relentless, each blow resonating through the field, sending tremors of excitement through the spectators.

In a sudden turn of events, Caesar unleashed a powerful strike, sending Butterfly tumbling to the ground. Gasps of disbelief rippled through the onlookers, and Ormerod, the proud owner of the fallen bird, felt his heart sink with the weight of defeat. Convinced that the battle was lost, he hastily retreated from the scene, his footsteps heavy with disappointment.

But fate, as capricious as it may be, had other plans in store. Just as Ormerod distanced himself from the field, a roar of jubilation erupted, echoing in his ears. Perplexed and intrigued, he halted in his tracks and turned to gaze upon the spectacle he believed he had lost.

To his astonishment, Butterfly, defying all odds, had risen from the ground, his spirit unbroken and his determination unyielding. In a display of unwavering resilience, he launched a relentless assault upon Caesar, turning the tables on his adversary. The crowd erupted in exultation, their voices echoing through the valley, celebrating the triumph of the gallant Butterfly.

Caesar, once a formidable contender, now lay defeated at the hands of the indomitable Butterfly. Ormerod's joy knew no bounds as he rejoined the fervent crowd, his heart brimming with pride for his resilient champion. It was a victory that defied expectations and immortalized the memory of the fighting cocks that had graced Mereclough.

In honor of this historic event, the inn that stood witness to the valiant battle forever bore the name of the Fighting Cocks. Its sign proudly displayed a verse that recounted the tale for all who passed by:

"For heaps of gold and silver we do fight; Death comes at every blow if it hits right. Towneley's great Caesar doth bleeding lie: Killed by Ormerod's gallant Butterfly."

And so, the legacy of the Fighting Cocks at Mereclough endured, a testament to the unyielding spirit and the unpredictable turns of fate that reside within the realm of mortal combat. The tale would be told and retold, ensuring that the valor of Butterfly and the echoes of their battle would forever resonate within the hearts of those who knew their story.

By Donald Jay